

INFORMATION REPORT

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SUBJECT Vehicular Development in the Soviet Army

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1. Q. Are the Soviets developing armored personnel carriers?

A. No, there is no such thing as a Soviet armored personnel carrier. American half-tracks are being used exclusively. Some of these may be Soviet produced but certainly are identical to those obtained through the Americans in World War II. Of these there are plenty. As an example of the 87 vehicles in a tank regiment, only three are Soviet made. There is no concerted program for the development of armored personnel carriers as such. The new technique is to eliminate personnel carriers and for infantry to ride on the tanks.

2. Q. Are the Soviets developing any airborne tanks?

A. No.

3. Q. What is the general opinion concerning the employment of self-propelled weapons versus towed and AT weapons?

A. They are two completely different weapons. The self-propelled direct fire weapon is not basically an AT gun. Its primary mission is the direct, continuous fire support of infantry troops the same as that of tanks. A secondary mission, and a weak one at that, is anti-tank. It is not anticipated that the self-propelled gun will replace the towed AT gun on the battlefield, although their ammunition and gun characteristics are the same for all practical purposes. The towed AT gun is more flexible, has a lower silhouette, is more easily dug in, can fire at a higher rate of speed and maintain a greater stock of ammunition than the self-propelled gun can. The self-propelled gun is limited by terrain, is a larger object to dig in, its crew is somewhat cramped and it is restricted by the basic load of ammunition, which it carries. For all of these reasons the 100-mm towed AT gun is considered the basic AT weapon.

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